



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
North Atlantic Division

# RBC Newsletter

A bi-monthly Regional Business Center publication  
North Atlantic Division, Birthplace of the Corps



June/July 2006

## Strategic Review Conference in NYC

By JoAnne Castagna, New York District and David Lipsky, NAD

Photo by Dan Desmet, NY District

"The key to our future success is *'Leading Change While Building Trust and the Team'*," MG Grisoli told the 45 participants at the Division's Strategic Review Conference held in Manhattan May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

Grisoli presented the conference objectives which included approving the Regional Command Budget Guidance, developing a framework for implementation of the Corps' Campaign Goals, determining a regional response to changes in the military construction program, and reviewing our USACE 2012 status. The attendees also planned to shape a future Senior Leadership Conference and the departing leaders would share observations. Grisoli said, "You can either take the lead or you can follow. If you take the lead, you control your own destiny."

Irma Nanez, Chief, Business Resource Division (NAD), led the discussion of the region's FY 2007 Budget and a new requirement for regional rates. Starting in FY 2007, all NAD customers will be charged the same rates for services, which will increase operational efficiency. "Our regional rate issue is driving the right intent – regional cooperation. This is a good thing. At the end of the day we will be a better organization," said Grisoli. The conferees agreed that Regional Rates will take shape over time and that this will be a new way of doing business.

One area where the region's workload will be increasing is military construction. COL Rick Bond, Commander, Health Facility Planning Agency, discussed his agency's mission to "plan and execute innovative medical facilities for military service men and women and their families." Bond said they will continue to team with the Corps to meet the increasing demand for facilities. "We want facilities that are the best value for our soldiers. Facilities they can walk into and feel confident in the service they will receive. We would like to see the Corps deliver products that will be tools for retention and recruiting."

The attendees discussed the military's transformation and what this means for our region. "The Department of Defense is looking to us to deliver for them," said Grisoli. "We must work regionally to offer our customers the most effective and efficient solutions. This will be a tall order. We must look to new ways of doing business to meet the challenge. Grisoli said our region is assisting the military in its transformation, as demonstrated by New York District's work at Fort Drum. The military's footprint is significantly changing, thus requiring new infrastructure and the Corps is being called upon to meet this challenge."

The regional leaders focused on the three key goals of the Corps' Campaign Plan and their objectives:



### Attendees listen to MG Grisoli discuss Campaign Plan

- Support Stability, Reconstruction and Homeland Security Operations
- Develop Sound Water Resources Solutions
- Enhance Life-Cycle Infrastructure Management

After discussing each one of these objectives, the team better understood USACE's goals and realized the importance for NAD to develop an implementation plan for these corporate objectives to shape our future.

Larry Mazzola, NAD Chief, Business Management Division led a discussion about NAD's successes and challenges of working as a regional team under USACE 2012. Mazzola said that in many ways our Division is working as a regional team with the districts sharing projects, working virtually and sharing regional expertise. He discussed areas we need to strengthen including enhancing Communities of Practice and embracing P2.

The theme of working as a region was emphasized by the departing commanders as they each shared their observations about the region's way ahead. Their thoughts, observations and insights will be integrated into the region's future plans.

MG Ron Johnson, the Corps' Deputy Commanding General, was invited to spend time with our team and speak about the agency's future direction. During the team dinner, MG Johnson stressed the importance of leadership development (building the bench), teamwork, and a willingness to change as key to the Corps' future success. His visit confirmed the need to shape the future of our team.

As the conference drew to a close, the attendees agreed they accomplished much of what they had planned to cover.

The regional leaders:

- Approved the draft regional rate plan
- Gained a strong appreciation of where we are as a team
- Set a timeline to implement the USACE Campaign Plan

(Continued next page)

## Departing Leaders

Photos: David Lipsky



**COL Yvonne  
Prettyman-Beck,  
Norfolk District**



**LTC Bob Ruch,  
Philadelphia  
District**



**COL Rick Polo,  
New York District**



**COL Bob Davis,  
Baltimore District**



**COL Frank Kosich,  
NAD Headquarters**

## Strategic Review Conference

(continued from page 1)

- Gained a better understanding of the direction where USACE is heading and the importance for us
- Agreed to host the Corps' Senior Leadership Conference in January 2007

Grisoli was pleased with the conference, saying, "This enabled the team to better understand each others' viewpoints on tough issues while building trust and the team." For more information on the Conference, [click here](#) (network computer access only).

**CORRECTION TO LAST ISSUE: JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D. wrote the story on the National Security Personnel System**

## Commander's focus



### Shaping Our future

**Bill Grisoli  
Division Commander**

On June 16, 1775, the US Army Corps of Engineers was founded to serve our great nation. Our forefathers saw many opportunities for the young Army engineers to support the development and defense of our country. We helped to shape the young nation's future then as we are doing now. Our proud history clearly demonstrates that when we were needed, we were there!

More than 200 years later, we continue to plan our future to ensure we remain relevant, ready, responsive, and reliable. Late last month, at our Strategic Leaders Conference in New York City, we afforded our senior leaders time to reflect, review, and share ideas as we lay the groundwork for our way ahead. It allowed us to better understand how we contribute to project delivery now and in the future given several new initiatives. Project delivery is what we do and we do it well but we should always be searching for ways to improve. During the conference, I truly enjoyed the professional dialogue with our leaders and believe we all departed with a better understanding of where we are and where we need to head. It also enhanced our internal relationships and strengthened the team! Over the

next 2-3 months, we will face several major challenges and changes in our region: four of our District commanders and our Deputy Commander will transition; we are required to implement regional rates in FY07, and we may experience a very active hurricane season this summer and early fall.

All departing commanders must have comprehensive transition plans to ensure a seamless transition in the leadership of the district. Everyone will play a role in easing these transitions. Our plans will also include the challenges ahead with the hurricane season and the implementation of regional rates.

During this hurricane season, the team must be ready to respond to our nation's needs. Whether the storm impacts the east coast or down in the gulf, the Corps will be called on again to support the effort. As FEMA's engineers, we play a valuable role during emergency operations in support of the National Response Plan. In addition, we may be required to execute Civil Works responsibilities and support the Department of Defense.

We must also not forget those volunteers who have deployed to GRD and AED. Remember GWOT remains our number one priority and they continue to need our volunteers!

Remember people change and shape organizations; therefore, it is up to us to manage and lead regional change over time. The ball is in our court—do not drop it!

Enjoy the summer. Relax with your families and be safe!

**STAY ON POINT!**

Bill Grisoli

# MAJOR GENERAL Bill Grisoli promoted at Fort Hamilton

Photos by Tex Jobe, Balt. Dist.

Brigadier General William T. (Bill) Grisoli, the Commander of the North Atlantic Division of the Corps of Engineers, was promoted to the rank of Major General on April 24. Lieutenant General Carl A. Strock, Chief of Engineers, presided over the ceremony.

"The Army recognized that Bill is a great leader," Strock said. "He was selected by a very high level of the Army to wear these two stars and is being promoted because he does every job to the best of his ability."

The orders promoting Grisoli said, "The President of the United States has reposed special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities of Brigadier General William T. Grisoli. In view of these qualities and his demonstrated potential for increased responsibility, he is therefore authorized to wear the uniform and insignia of a Major General effective 24 April 2006." The promotion took place at the theater in Fort Hamilton.

Following the ceremony, General Grisoli called the day "humbling" because "it really is an honor to be a general officer in the Corps of Engineers and the United States Army."



**Major General Ann Harrell (USAF) and Major General Grisoli's mother Jeanette Grisoli pinning stars on his uniform as LTG Carl Strock, Chief of Engineers observes.**



**Jeanette Grisoli lets her son know how she feels!**

Grisoli assumed command of the North Atlantic Division on Aug. 1, 2005. He oversees the planning, design and construction of projects to support the military, protect America's water resources, and restore and enhance the environment within a 180,000-square-mile area along the Atlantic Coast, including 13 states from Maine to Virginia and the District of Columbia. He is also responsible for a variety of engineering and construction activities for international, federal, state and local governments and agencies in the United States and overseas, serving 51 other countries altogether.

General Grisoli was born in New York City and raised in Bayport, Long Island. He is a registered professional engineer in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Grisoli graduated from the United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y., and was commissioned in 1976. He received a master's in civil engineering from the University of Illinois and a second master's in Natural Resource Strategy from the National Defense University.



## NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

### Effectiveness of Partnering in the Regulatory Program

**By James Haggerty, NAD**

Partnering works to complete important highway projects in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania! This is evident by the continued success of the Pennsylvania Environment and Transportation Steering Committee that involves Corps participation across intra-district (NAB as lead district, with NAP and LRP) and intra-divisional lines (NAD and LRD).

Imagine pulling together three Corps districts, two MSC's, Washington Headquarters, another federal agency and two state agencies and having that group successfully collaborate on a regional approach toward programmatic improvements. That is exactly what this committee has achieved.

As the NAD Regulatory Program Manager, I serve as the Division committee representative, which meets quarterly. This is an exceptional forum for discussing and understanding the needs of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, a major regional customer of the Regulatory Program. Over the past year and a half the involved Corps divisions and districts have worked to help realign business practices, thereby improving interagency communication and timeliness of constructing important highway projects.

The Steering Committee identifies major issues and assigns taskers to one of several project delivery teams. Within the past several months, PDT's have delivered several final products, most notably a communications flowchart for PennDOT personnel to follow during the construction phase of highway projects, and a position paper outlining environmental responsibilities with regard to highway construction waste and borrow sites. A third work product, a listing of standardized special permit conditions for DA permits, awaits approval by counsel for the involved agencies.

This is an excellent example of the Corps focusing on improving the execution of the Regulatory Program, to the benefit of the regulated public in Pennsylvania. This success story will be shared with the NAD Regulatory Community to serve as a model for [interagency cooperation](#).

### Leadership changes throughout the division

**By Lou Fioto, NAD**

There will be several changes in the leadership of the North Atlantic Division in the next few months.

It began when the Division Commander, MG Bill Grisoli, was promoted in April.

In June, Deputy Division Commander COL Frank Kosich will leave NAD to work with FEMA Region I in Boston.

His replacement will be COL Chris Larsen from the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

On June 30, COL Dionysios (Dan) Anninos, who is attending the Air War College in Alabama, will replace COL Yvonne Prettyman-Beck as Norfolk District Commander. Prettyman-Beck will become Chief of Staff at the Corps of Engineers Headquarters.

On July 14, COL Peter Mueller, who is attending the Industrial College of the Armed Forces at Fort McNair, will replace COL Robert J. Davis Jr. as Baltimore District Commander. Davis, who joined the District in 2003, will retire after serving our army over 26 years.

On Aug. 25, COL Aniello "Nello" Tortora will replace COL Richard J. Polo Jr. as the New York District Commander. COL Polo will retire after serving our army for over 26 years.

On July 7, LTC Gwen Baker, now serving with the Joint Task Force North in El Paso, Texas, will replace LTC Robert Ruch as Commander, Philadelphia District. Ruch will be the Division Engineer for the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas.

Photo by Peter Shugert, NY District



### ASA Visits Pompton Lakes Dam

The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, John Paul Woodley (From right to left); Lloyd Caldwell, Director of Programs, NAD; Danny Lee, NAN Construction Division and Col. Richard J. Polo, Jr, NY District Commander inspected the progress of construction at the Pompton Lakes Dam project site in Oakland, NJ.

When completed in August of this year, the project will protect families against a 40-year flood event in Oakland along with portions of Pompton Lakes and Wayne Township. Mr. Woodley was briefed on the pressing need to restore \$2.5 million of net federal funding revocations from this flood control project.

## **James River, Virginia**

# **A partnership that keeps the river channel open**

**By Tom Szelest, Norfolk District**

Huge containerships wend their way 90 miles inland towards Virginia's state capital as pilots work to keep the vessels within the river's navigable channel... a feat made possible through a successful, ongoing ten-year public-private partnership. The James River Partnership, coordinated by the Army Corps of Engineers and comprised of numerous federal, state and local agencies, Congressional representatives, private associations and corporations has made the James River Federal Navigation Project a success, by keeping the vital James River, in southeastern Virginia, open to unrestricted navigation continuously for the past ten years. "In 1995, the public and private marine terminals along the James River were facing a severe problem," stated Martin Moynihan, Executive Director of the Port of Richmond, Va, during a recent annual meeting of the partnership. "The continued shoaling of the river's navigation channel and the continuing shortfall of federal funding for the maintenance dredging were placing their economic viability in jeopardy. From 1994 – 1996, the Virginia Pilot's Association had to place severe draft and tidal restrictions on vessels transiting the James River." Then in 1996, the James River Partnership was organized to address the issue of improving navigation on the James River and to provide for year-round, unrestricted vessel transits on the river."

The stated objective of the partnership is to maintain unrestricted navigation with economic benefits for the Commonwealth of Virginia, while maintaining environmental safeguards and fostering environmental cooperation and stewardship. Each year, the partnership faces a number of challenges. This year's

annual meeting, held Apr. 26, focused on several key issues for the coming years. These included the reduction of Operations & Maintenance dollars for maintenance dredging, dredged material placement area maintenance and repair, and beneficial uses of dredged material associated with increasing containment volume in the dredged material placement areas.

A lot has been accomplished through the cooperation and coordination of the partnership's federal, state and local partners with the full support of maritime industries along the James River. By working together, the partnership has accomplished many of its stated goals. These include increased project funding; developing innovative contracting procedures to increase responsiveness to get a dredge on scene when shoaling problems are identified; completion of a number of environmental studies, sediment testing and archeological investigations; engineering analysis of sediment fate; improved design and utilization of placement sites; channel realignments; and identification of additional beneficial uses of dredged

material.

Mike Johnson, NAD Operations-Regulatory CoP leader attended this meeting. "The James River Partnership gathering is an excellent example of many diverse groups coming together in pursuit of a common goal, which is to support the initiatives on this great river," Johnson states. He emphasized the importance of telling their story and the efficiency the partnership has displayed in bringing many interests together to



**Container ship "Independent Trader" navigates the James River as it returns from the Richmond Deepwater Terminal.**

communicate their business case, often getting the resources. Johnson will continue to work with the Operations Chiefs within the Region to leverage these types of forums as part of our Regional Interface role and also to build on the relationships we have with our partners and stakeholders.

## **Competitive Sourcing** **"Soft landing" to help employees**

**By Dawn Clappsy, NAD**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has always recognized its valuable workforce. As part of competitive sourcing, transition services and assistance will be provided to employees whose jobs may be impacted due to a competitive sourcing initiative.

This article will provide only basic information on the changes. Each Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) has specific information and the timeline of events to obtain these services as the dates the competitive sourcing initiatives are finalized.

A transition or "soft landing" process will assist with both professional and personal changes. As part of the "soft landing" process, a variety of flexibilities and programs may be used to make the transition from government employment to private sector, or to another government position. These will assist employees by providing the needed support.

We are committed to providing employees with the tools and needed resources to minimize the impact of involuntarily separation, while ensuring mission accomplishment.

Transition services will be provided in partnership with the CPAC. Information and program opportunities will be announced during the expected period of transition.

Services may include any or all of the following:

**DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP)** is an automated referral program that matches eligible registrants with job opportunities at DoD activities.

**Reemployment Priority List (RPL)** is a government-wide program required by law and subject to OPM regulations, and is separate from the PPP. The RPL applies to positions within DoD within the same commuting area as the position from which the employee has been or will be separated.

**Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan** provides priority consideration for eligible applicants in other federal agencies.

**Local Placement Options:** Vacant positions may be used for placing adversely affected employees through reassignment or voluntary change to lower grade. In some instances qualifications may be modified or waived to facilitate placement.

**Outreach Placement Options:** Lists of affected employees will be sent to nearby federal agencies requesting noncompetitive placement consideration.

**Workforce Investment Act (WIA)** is sponsored by the Department of Labor and administered by the various State Employment Security Agencies. Through WIA, separating employees may be eligible for career counseling, testing, retraining, placement assistance, financial counseling, and other services. Local CPACs can advise employees on their eligibility for these services.

**Relocation Entitlements:** Under certain circumstances,

relocation funds may be paid to move you from one duty station to another.

**Severance Pay:** Pay is determined by creditable years of service, basic pay at the time of eligibility, and an adjustment for employees older than age 40.

**Unemployment Services:** The appropriate Statement Employment Security Agency determines your right to unemployment compensation under the applicable unemployment compensation laws.

**Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA):** The authority to offer VERA may be delegated to the installation commander and is an early retirement option. It allows an individual to retire at age 50 with 20 years of service, or retire at any age with 25 years of service. For individuals covered under the Civil Service Retirement System, retirees under age 55 are subject to an annuity reduction of 2% per year for every year under age 55.

**Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP):** To reduce involuntary separations, local commanders have the authority to offer VSIP, also referred to as buyouts or separation incentives. The buyout payment before reductions is either \$25,000 or the amount of severance pay an employee would receive under the standard severance pay formula, whichever is less. Local commanders may also request approval to offer VSIP along with VERA. The number of VSIPs that can be approved in DoD is limited to 25,000 per year.

In addition, the competitive reassignment process will be used to try to place directly affected employees. This provides a mechanism to select USACE's well-qualified employees for the new organization before any other candidate from within or outside the Corps. (This process may be subject to some mandatory placement programs). The directly affected employees must show interest in positions at their current or lower grade by submitting a two-page resume. Employees may apply to positions within or outside their geographic area.

Individual initiative is key to successful transition. Employees can assist by ensuring that personnel records are complete, resume is up to date, and to take advantage of available services.

Confidential counseling and referral services are available for any personal difficulties. Should you find the need for advice assistance, please contact your employee assistance representative. If you have any questions, you may contact a human resources specialist in your local CPAC who can provide in-depth counseling, advice, and assistance.

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